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EIU Alum, Founder of "Girls Fight Back!" to Lecture at Eastern

Mar-23-2004

When her friend and sorority sister, Shannon McNamara, was violently murdered three years ago, Erin Weed decided that women need to know more about fighting back against attackers.

From the loss was born "Girls Fight Back," a program designed to teach women to trust their "gut" in threatening situations and how to effectively fend off a rapist or other attacker.

Weed, a 1999 graduate of Eastern Illinois University, will return to her alma mater at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 24, so that she may present "Girls Fight Back," a sexual assault prevention program and self-defense workshop. Admission to the event, geared toward females, is \$2 for the general public and free for EIU students with Panther Card ID. The presentation will take place in the Grand Ballroom, located in Eastern's University Union.

In her campus program, Weed talks about her friend, Shannon, and discusses the psychology of a crime, practical weapons that every woman has in her purse, how to feel safe in a violent world and motivational ideas for women on how to feel strong and empowered in their campus and home environments.

The interactive portion of the program teaches striking techniques, takedowns and how to avoid crime altogether.

Attendees are encouraged to dress casually and be prepared for physical contact.

Weed, who is certified by the American Women's Self Defense Association, has received training in car jacking situations, multiple assailant attacks, firearms, knives and street weapons, rape prevention techniques, criminal psychology and the laws governing the judicious use of force.

Always funny and upbeat, Weed gives women courage and hope. "Because," she says, "the only thing more dangerous than an attacker is a pissed-off woman!"

Weed's appearance -- a Women's History and Awareness Month event -- is being co-sponsored by Eastern's University Board and the Pan-Hellenic Council. More information about "Girls Fight Back" can be found at www.GirlsFightBack.com.

